

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year 1998

SUMMARY: On June 4, 1997, the President signed into law Pub. L. 105-17, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, amending the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

This notice provides closing dates and other information regarding the transmittal of applications for fiscal year 1998 competitions under two programs authorized by IDEA, as amended. The two programs are: (1) Special Education—Personnel Preparation to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities (two priorities); and (2) Special Education—Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities (one priority).

This notice supports the National Education Goals by helping to improve results for children with disabilities.

Waiver of Rulemaking

It is generally the practice of the Secretary to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 661(e)(2) of IDEA makes the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) inapplicable to the priorities in this notice. In order to make awards on a timely basis, the Secretary has decided to publish these priorities in final under the authority of section 661(e)(2).

General Requirements

(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (see Section 606 of IDEA);

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see Section 661(f)(1)(A) of IDEA); and

(c) Projects funded under these priorities must budget for a two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. during each year of the project.

Note: The Department of Education is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Special Education—Personnel Preparation To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities [CFDA 84.325]

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to (1) help address State-identified needs for qualified personnel in special education, related

services, early intervention, and regular education, to work with children with disabilities; and (2) to ensure that those personnel have the skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through research and experience to be successful, that are needed to serve those children.

Eligible Applicants: State and local educational agencies; institutions of higher education; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; and Indian tribes or tribal organizations.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86; (b) The selection criteria included in regulations in 34 CFR 318.23; and (c) 34 CFR 318.31–318.33.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

Priority: Under section 673 and 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priorities. The Secretary funds under this competition only those applications that meet these absolute priorities:

Absolute Priority 1—Projects of National Significance (84.325N)

The Secretary establishes an absolute priority to support projects that address issues of national significance and have broad applicability. Projects supported under this priority must develop, implement, and evaluate innovative models that will serve as blueprints for improving the preparation and ongoing development of early intervention personnel, general and special education teachers, administrators, related service personnel, and paraprofessionals who have responsibility for ensuring that children with disabilities achieve to high standards and become independent, productive citizens.

Priority: A project of national significance must:

(a) Include a detailed description of a personnel preparation model, including descriptions of: the population(s) that the model is designed to serve; the content and expected outcomes of the model; the processes for, and costs involved with, implementation and ongoing evaluation; and the organizational and contextual factors that may either facilitate or impede implementation of the model. The model must—

(1) Be guided by a conceptual framework that integrates all proposed model components; and

(2) Incorporate relevant, research-based curricular content and pedagogical practice;

(b) Provide substantial evidence that the proposed model will serve a broad-based need;

(c) Establish an advisory panel of relevant stakeholders and potential users to provide guidance that will help to assure that the model developed has broad applicability;

(d) Conduct ongoing formative evaluations of project activities, and a final evaluation to assess the success of the model in enhancing the skills, knowledge, and practices of professional personnel that will lead to improved results for children with disabilities;

(e) Produce a model “blueprint” or case study that would permit others to replicate the model and includes comprehensive information related to paragraphs (a) and (b), and comprehensive outcomes of the final evaluation required under paragraph (d); and

(f) In addition to the annual two day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. mentioned in the General Requirements section of this notice, budget for another annual two-day trip to Washington, D.C. to collaborate with the Federal project officer and other projects funded under this priority by sharing information and discussing model development, implementation, evaluation and dissemination issues, including the carrying out of cross-project dissemination activities.

Invitational Priorities

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary is particularly interested in applications that meet one of the following invitational priorities. However, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) an application that meets one or more of these invitational priorities does not receive competitive or absolute preference over other applications:

(a) Projects that improve the ability of school principals and other local educational agency administrators to provide leadership in meeting the needs of children with disabilities through:

(1) Model preservice programs for the training and certification of school administrators (including principals and other instructional leaders) that incorporate relevant special education content and provide for trainees to apply special education knowledge in field-based practice opportunities; or,

(2) Model projects that provide ongoing training for practicing school principals, LEA administrators, local school board members, and other local

decision makers in order to improve the ability of such individuals to make informed instructional and policy-related decisions regarding the provision of appropriate, beneficial services and supports for children with disabilities.

(b) Projects that improve the training of paraprofessionals to meet the needs of children, K through age 21, with high- or low-incidence disabilities, in general education classrooms through:

(1) Model preservice programs for the training and certification of paraprofessionals that incorporate relevant special and regular education content and provide opportunities for trainees to apply their knowledge and skills in field-based practice;

(2) Model inservice programs for current paraprofessionals to improve their knowledge, skills, and practices; or,

(3) Model pre- or inservice programs that incorporate content for teachers to supervise and work more effectively with paraprofessionals.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Maximum Award: The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$200,000 for any single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Page Limits: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers in evaluating an application. An applicant must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 40 double-spaced pages, using the following standards: (1) A "page" is 8½" x 11" (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). (2) All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs, must be double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch). If using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch. If using a nonproportional font or a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters to the inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I—the cover sheet; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget justification); Part IV—the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, resumes, bibliography, and letters of support. However, all of the application narrative must be included in Part III. If an application narrative uses a smaller print size, spacing, or

margin that would make the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, the application will not be considered for funding.

Program Authority: Section 673 of the Act.

Absolute Priority 2—Partnerships to Link Personnel Training and School Practice [84.325P]

Background

Teachers need to be prepared to provide effective instruction across the full range of student abilities. More than 90 percent of all students with disabilities spend at least a portion of their school day in a general education classroom. The movement toward inclusive education in today's schools requires that general and special education teachers work together to meet the needs of students with disabilities. However, extensive data indicate that general education teachers do not feel that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the educational needs of these students in their classrooms and that special education teachers are required to assume roles (e.g., consulting with general education teachers, co-teaching in general education classrooms, and supervising paraprofessional staff) for which they are insufficiently prepared.

In order to meet the challenge of preparing general and special education teachers to be effective in addressing the needs, and improving the results, of students with disabilities in inclusive schools, teacher preparation programs must be grounded in the structural, organizational, and instructional realities of schools, while schools must facilitate continuous improvement of teacher knowledge and skills. Institutions that prepare teachers and the schools in which teachers work both have a responsibility to ensure that teachers (special and regular education) can effectively fulfill their roles in working with children with disabilities. Too often the sole relationship between preparation programs and local schools is limited to setting up practicum settings for trainees. Faculty members at Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) are often minimally involved in practicum supervision. Universities and schools can no longer afford to work in isolation. Similarly, training regular and special education teachers can no longer be viewed as separate functions. The following priority is intended to develop models for building and enhancing partnerships between training institutions and local schools in order to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of preservice preparation programs and ongoing professional

development activities for teachers and instructional leaders (both special and regular education) who serve children with disabilities.

The power of the partnerships supported through this priority should not be underestimated. The Secretary expects projects to develop models that intersect between preservice and inservice development for professional personnel and will have a significant impact on the improvement of educational practices that will lead to better results for children. It is intended that these models will provide a means by which local schools and IHEs can simultaneously improve their work and effectiveness.

Priority: The Secretary establishes an absolute priority to support projects that develop, implement, and evaluate innovative models for engaging general education and special education faculty in IHEs and general education and special education teachers and instructional leaders in local schools and districts in a dynamic and enduring partnership to enhance and simultaneously improve the quality of preservice preparation and ongoing professional development of teachers and instructional leaders. Partnership activities must be designed to ensure that both special education and regular education professionals have the knowledge and skills necessary to improve results for children with disabilities.

Projects funded under this priority must:

(a) Develop a partnership model for linking IHE personnel training programs with local school practice that is guided by a conceptual framework incorporating relevant, research-based knowledge and practice. The partnership model must include the following features:

(1) A systematic approach to professional development at all stages of the training continuum by focusing on continuous learning by teachers, instructional leaders, and faculties of IHE education programs;

(2) The integration of theory and practice to produce more practical, contextualized theory and more theoretically grounded, broadly informed practice;

(3) A strong commitment to research-based change that is continually responsive to personnel needs and to advances in the knowledge base; and

(4) A description of the benefits that will accrue to all stakeholders, including, but not limited to, IHE faculty, teachers in training, practicing professionals in local schools, and students with disabilities, as a result of

the implementation of the proposed partnership model.

(b) Provide substantial evidence that the proposed model will serve a broad-based need.

(c) Establish an advisory panel of relevant stakeholders and potential users to provide guidance that will help to assure the model developed has broad applicability.

(d) Include the following partnerships activities:

(1) Identification of a common core of knowledge and skills that are appropriate for all prospective general and special education teachers, are aligned with critical teaching standards and with high student content and performance standards, and for which there is broad based support among all stakeholders;

(2) Clarification of the current and emerging roles and responsibilities of special educators in inclusive schools, including identification of the specialized knowledge and skill competencies that these educators must perform effectively, and for which there is broad based support among all stakeholders;

(3) Modification of curricula and materials used for preservice preparation of general and special education teachers that is consistent with the requirements under paragraph (a) and is conducted through collaboration between IHEs and schools or districts; and

(4) Development of an approach for providing intensive, ongoing professional development that will advance the career-long learning of school and IHE personnel and ensure that children with disabilities achieve to high standards.

(e) Conduct ongoing formative evaluations of project activities, and a final evaluation to assess the success of the partnership model in enhancing the skills, knowledge, and practices of professional personnel that will lead to improved results for children with disabilities.

(f) Develop a plan for sustaining implementation of the model beyond the period of Federal funding for this project.

(g) Produce a model "blueprint" or case study that would permit others to replicate or implement the model and includes comprehensive information related to paragraphs (a) through (d) and comprehensive outcomes of the final evaluation required under paragraph (e).

(h) In addition to the annual two day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, DC, mentioned in the General Requirements section of this notice, budget for another annual two-

day trip to Washington, DC, to collaborate with the Federal project officer and other projects funded under this priority by sharing information and discussing model development, implementation, and dissemination issues, including the carrying out of cross-project dissemination activities.

Under this priority, the project period is up to 60 months subject to the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a) for continuation awards. In determining whether to continue the project for the fourth and fifth years of the project period, the Secretary, in addition to the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a), will consider—

(a) The recommendation of a review team consisting of three experts selected by the Secretary. The services of the review team, including a two-day site visit to the project, are to be performed during the last half of the project's second year and may be included in that year's evaluation required under 34 CFR 75.590. Costs associated with the services to be performed by the review team must also be included in the project's budget for year two. These costs are estimated to be approximately \$4,000;

(b) The timeliness and effectiveness with which all requirements of the grant have been or are being met by the project; and

(c) The degree to which the project's design and methodology demonstrates the potential for advancing significant new knowledge.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Maximum Award: The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$300,000 for any single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Page Limits: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers in evaluating an application. An applicant must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 double-spaced pages, using the following standards: (1) A "page" is 8" x 11" (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). (2) All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs, must be double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch). If using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch. If using a nonproportional font or

a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters to the inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I—the cover sheet; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget justification); Part IV—the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, resumes, bibliography, and letters of support. However, all of the application narrative must be included in Part III. If an application narrative uses a smaller print size, spacing, or margin that would make the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, the application will not be considered for funding.

Program Authority: Section 673 of IDEA.

Special Education—Training and Information for Parents of Children With Disabilities [CFDA 84.328C]

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to support local parent organizations to help ensure that underserved parents of children with disabilities, including low-income parents, parents of children with limited English proficiency, and parents with disabilities, have the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children with disabilities.

Eligible Applicants: Local parent organizations must meet the criteria in section 682(g) of the Act, and also must meet one of the following criteria—

(a) Have a board of directors the majority of whom are from the community to be served; or

(b) Have as part of its mission, serving the interests of individuals with disabilities from such community; and have a special governing committee to administer the project, a majority of the members of which are individuals from such community; examples of administrative responsibilities include controlling the use of the project funds, and hiring and managing project personnel.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, and 85; and (b) the selection criteria included in 34 CFR 316.22.

Priority: Under sections 661(e)(2) and 683 of the Act, and 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. The Secretary funds under this competition only those applications that meet this absolute priority:

Absolute Priority—Community Parent Resource Centers (84.029C)

The purpose of this statutory priority is to support local parent training and

information centers that will help ensure that underserved parents of children with disabilities, including low-income parents, parents of children with limited English proficiency, and parents with disabilities, have the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children with disabilities to—

(a) Meet developmental goals and, to the maximum extent possible, those challenging standards that have been established for all children; and

(b) Be prepared to lead productive independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible.

Each community parent training and information center supported under this priority must—

(a) Provide training and information that meets the training and information needs of parents of children with disabilities proposed to be served by the project;

(b) Assist parents to understand the availability of, and how to effectively use, procedural safeguards under Section 615 of the Act, including encouraging the use, and explaining the benefits, of alternative methods of dispute resolution, such as the mediation process described in the Act;

(c) Serve the parents of infants, toddlers, and children with the full range of disabilities by assisting parents to—

(1) Better understand the nature of their children's disabilities and their educational and developmental needs;

(2) Communicate effectively with personnel responsible for providing special education, early intervention, and related services;

(3) Participate in decision making processes and the development of individualized education programs and individualized family service plans;

(4) Obtain appropriate information about the range of options, programs, services, and resources available to assist children with disabilities and their families;

(5) Understand the provisions of the Act for the education of, and the provision of early intervention services to, children with disabilities; and

(6) Participate in school reform activities;

(d) Contract with the State education agencies, if the State elects to contract with the community parent resource centers, for the purpose of meeting with parents who choose not to use the mediation process, to encourage the use and explain the benefits of mediation, consistent with Sections 615(e)(2)(B) and (D) of the Act;

(e) In order to serve parents and families of children with the full range of disabilities, network with appropriate clearinghouses, including organizations conducting national dissemination activities under section 685(d) of the Act, and with other national, State, and local organizations and agencies, such as protection and advocacy agencies;

(f) Establish cooperative partnerships with the parent training and information centers funded under Section 682 of the Act;

(g) Be designed to meet the specific needs of families who experience significant isolation from available sources of information and support; and

(h) Annually report to the Secretary on—

(1) The number of parents to whom it provided information and training in the most recently concluded fiscal year, and

(2) The effectiveness of strategies used to reach and serve parents, including underserved parents of children with disabilities.

Competitive Priorities: Within this Absolute Priority, the Secretary, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), gives preference to applications that meet one or both of the following competitive priorities:

The Secretary awards 20 points to an application submitted by a local parent organization that has a board of directors, the majority of whom are parents of children with disabilities, from the community to be served. These points are in addition to any points the application earns under the selection criteria for the program.

The Secretary awards 10 points to an application that provides parent training and information in one or more Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities in a manner that meets the competitive priority relating to Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities published in the **Federal**

Register on November 7, 1994 (59 FR 55534). A list of areas that have been selected as Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities is included in the application package. These points are in addition to any points the application earns under the selection criteria for the program.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Project Award: Projects will not be funded in excess of \$100,000 for any single budget period of 12 months.

Program Authority: Section 683 of the Act.

For Applications and General Information Contact: Requests for applications and general information should be addressed to the Grants and Contracts Services Team, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., room 3317, Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202-2641. The preferred method for requesting information is to FAX your request to: (202) 205-8717. Telephone: (202) 260-9182.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number: (202) 205-8953.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of this notice or the application packages referred to in this notice in an alternate format (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Department as listed above. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

Intergovernmental Review

These programs are subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. The objective of the Executive order is to foster an inter-governmental partnership and a strengthened federalism by relying on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

In accordance with the order, this document is intended to provide early notification of the Department's specific plans and actions for those program.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

CFDA No. and name	Applications available	Application deadline date	Deadline for intergovernmental review	Maximum award (per year)*	Page limit*	Estimated number of awards
84.325N Professional Development—Projects of National Significance	5/27/98	7/10/98	9/08/98	\$200,000	40	15

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998—Continued

CFDA No. and name	Applications available	Application deadline date	Deadline for intergovernmental review	Maximum award (per year)*	Page limit*	Estimated number of awards
84.325P Professional Development—Partnerships to Link Personnel Training and School Practice	5/27/98	7/10/98	9/08/98	300,000	50	4
84.328C Community Parent Resource Centers	5/27/98	7/17/98	9/15/98	100,000	NONE	10

*The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding the amount listed for each priority for any single budget period of 12 months, except 84.328C, Community Parent Resource Centers.

**Applicants must limit the Application Narrative, Part III of the Application, to the page limits noted above. Please refer to the "Page Limit" section of this notice for the specific requirements. The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that does not adhere to this requirement.

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To use the pdf you must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader Program with Search,

which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using the pdf, call the U.S. Government Printing Office toll free at 1-888-293-6498.

Anyone may also view these documents in text copy only on an electronic bulletin board of the Department. Telephone: (202) 219-1511 or, toll free, 1-800-222-4922. The documents are located under Option

G—Files/Announcements, Bulletins, and Press Releases.

Note: The official version of a document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: May 13, 1998.

Judith E. Heumann,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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